MAGNOLIA SCHOOL

SUMMER READING AND POETRY

RISING 8TH GRADE

Reading great literature allows us to see the world through a new perspective. It allows us to transcend our lives and come to better understand humanity. Literature allows us to find beauty in the mundane as well as the extraordinary, to search for understanding and belonging, and it can bring us great joy. In *An Experiment in Criticism*, C.S. Lewis writes, "in reading great literature I become a thousand men and yet remain myself. Like a night sky in the Greek poem, I see with a myriad eyes, but it is still I who see. Here, as in worship, in love, in moral action, and in knowing, I transcend myself; and am never more myself when I do." Each of the works below have been carefully chosen to allow you to find time to enjoy reading and prepare you for the wonderful year we have ahead in our literature studies. Enjoy!

Your summer literature assignment consists of three main parts: Reading two books, memorizing and copying one poem, and answering a series of questions within your summer reading journal. Your summer reading assignment will be due on the first day of school and will be graded. Have fun reading!

READING

Read two books this summer. The first will be *Pygmalion,* and the second you may select from the list below:

1. *Required Book: Pygmalion* by George Bernard Shaw. Complete the accompanying journal assignment.
2. Book Choice: Choose one novel from the list below and complete the accompanying journal assignment. All summer reading works must be unabridged versions.
    - *King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table* by Roger Lancelyn Green
    - *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte
    - *Animal Farm* by George Orwell
    - *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury
    - Any from *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy by J. R. R. Tolkien.

POETRY

All eighth-grade students are required to choose one summer poem provided in this document, copy it word for word into their journals and memorize it for recitation on the first day of school. The full poems are listed in the final pages of this document.

1. Option #1: "The Cloud Confines" by Dante Gabriel Rossetti
2. Option #2: "A Psalm of Life" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
3. Option #3: "The Lady of Shalott" by Alfred Lord Tennyson

JOURNAL ASSIGNMENTS

Journal Requirements: Purchase an authentic, bound journal with lines marked for writing. If you have last year's summer reading journal, you may continue using it. Remember to do your best work and write clearly and neatly for each entry. Label and date each entry in your journal.

1. **Journal Assignment 1:** Complete after reading *Pygmalion* by George Bernard Shaw. Following your reading of the play, watch the 1964 classic musical film, My Fair Lady.
    a. Write a reflection comparing and contrasting the literary work with the film and share your own thoughts about the two works. Here are some questions to consider:
        - Did you enjoy the play? Why or why not?
        - What did you think of the main characters in the play? Who did you like and who did you dislike?
        - How was the film different from the play? How was it alike?
        - What did you learn from the play? What does it teach you about how others should be treated?
        - Is Eliza treated as a true human being or is she just seen as an experiment or a challenge just for the sake of sport? Is that right or wrong? Why?
        - What do you think Shaw is trying to say about his culture?
        - If you could criticize this play, what would you say? What parts did you disagree with?
        - How is the play satirical? How does Shaw show that others ought to be treated with dignity and respect no matter their circumstances?
    b. Your reflection should be at least two full paragraphs, but you are welcome to write more! It is a thought-provoking work of literature, and I will thoroughly enjoy reading your writing and seeing your thoughts and ideas on paper.

2. **Journal Assignment 2: Complete as you read**
    - As you read the novel, choose six quotations that stand out to you.
        - Choose two quotes from the beginning, two from the middle, and two from the end of the novel.Write each quotation in your journal followed by the page number.
    - Then, write 2-3 sentences reflecting on why you think the quotation is important.

3. **Journal Assignment 3:**
    Copy the poem you plan on memorizing into your journal word for word. Please follow the poetic formatting as you write. You may add decorations, doodles, or drawings to your copied poem if you'd like.

4. **Journal Assignment 4:**
    - Journals can be wonderful tools for capturing moments in time in our lives. Write about a family story or memory from your summer or your extended time at home. You can share a favorite memory, write about how you've grown as a person, a new hobby you've picked up, or a trip you took with your family.

“The Cloud Confines”

By Dante Gabriel Rossetti

The day is dark and the night
To him that would search their heart;
No lips of cloud that will part
Nor morning song in the light:
Only, gazing alone,
To him wild shadows are shown,
Deep under deep unknown
And height above unknown height.
Still we say as we go,i
"Strange to think by the way,
Whatever there is to know,
That shall we know one day."

The Past is over and fled;
Nam'd new, we name it the old;
Thereof some tale hath been told,
But no word comes from the dead;
Whether at all they be,
Or whether as bond or free,
Or whether they too were we,
Or by what spell they have sped.
Still we say as we go,i
"Strange to think by the way,
Whatever there is to know,
That shall we know one day."

What of the heart of hate
That beats in thy breast, O Time?i
Red strife from the furthest prime,
And anguish of fierce debate;
War that shatters her slain,
And peace that grinds them as grain,
And eyes fix'd ever in vain
On the pitiless eyes of Fate.
Still we say as we go,i
"Strange to think by the way,
Whatever there is to know,
That shall we know one day."

What of the heart of love
That bleeds in thy breast, O Man?i
Thy kisses snatch'd 'neath the ban
Of fangs that mock them above;
Thy bells prolong'd unto knells,
Thy hope that a breath dispels,
Thy bitter forlorn farewells
And the empty echoes thereof?
Still we say as we go,i
"Strange to think by the way,
Whatever there is to know,
That shall we know one day."

The sky leans dumb on the sea,
Aweary with all its wings;
And oh! the song the sea sings
Is dark everlastingly.
Our past is clean forgot,
Our present is and is not,
Our future's a seal'd seedplot,
And what betwixt them are we?i
We who say as we go,i
"Strange to think by the way,
Whatever there is to know,
That shall we know one day."

“A Psalm of Life”

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

What The Heart Of The Young Man Said To The Psalmist.

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
  Life is but an empty dream!
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
  And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
  And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
  Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
  Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow
  Find us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
  And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
  Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world’s broad field of battle,
  In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
  Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe’er pleasant!
  Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act,— act in the living Present!
  Heart within, and God o’erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
  We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
  Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
  Sailing o’er life’s solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
  Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
  With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
  Learn to labor and to wait.

“The Lady of Shalott” (1842)

By Alfred Lord Tennyson

Part I

On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
And thro' the field the road runs by
    To many-tower'd Camelot;
And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the lilies blow
Round an island there below,
    The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Thro' the wave that runs for ever
By the island in the river
    Flowing down to Camelot.
Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
Overlook a space of flowers,
And the silent isle imbowers
    The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow veil'd,
Slide the heavy barges trail'd
By slow horses; and unhail'd
The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd
    Skimming down to Camelot:
But who hath seen her wave her hand?
Or at the casement seen her stand?
Or is she known in all the land,
    The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early
In among the bearded barley,
Hear a song that echoes cheerly
From the river winding clearly,
    Down to tower'd Camelot:
And by the moon the reaper weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whispers " 'Tis the fairy
    Lady of Shalott."

Part II

There she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colours gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay
    To look down to Camelot.
She knows not what the curse may be,
And so she weaveth steadily,
And little other care hath she,
    The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
    Winding down to Camelot:
There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
    Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,
    Goes by to tower'd Camelot;
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two:
She hath no loyal knight and true,
    The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often thro' the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights
    And music, went to Camelot:
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed:
"I am half sick of shadows," said
    The Lady of Shalott.

Part III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves,
The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
    Of bold Sir Lancelot.
A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
    Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bridle bells rang merrily
    As he rode down to Camelot:
And from his blazon'd baldric slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armour rung,
    Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burn'd like one burning flame together,
    As he rode down to Camelot.
As often thro' the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
    Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd;
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode;
From underneath his helmet flow'd
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
    As he rode down to Camelot.
From the bank and from the river
He flash'd into the crystal mirror,
"Tirra lirra," by the river
    Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces thro' the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
    She look'd down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide;
The mirror crack'd from side to side;
"The curse is come upon me," cried
    The Lady of Shalott.

Part IV

In the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining,
Heavily the low sky raining
    Over tower'd Camelot;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the prow she wrote
    The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse
Like some bold seër in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance—
With a glassy countenance
    Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day
She loosed the chain, and down she lay;
The broad stream bore her far away,
    The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white
That loosely flew to left and right—
The leaves upon her falling light—
Thro' the noises of the night
    She floated down to Camelot:
And as the boat-head wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her singing her last song,
    The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,
And her eyes were darken'd wholly,
    Turn'd to tower'd Camelot.
For ere she reach'd upon the tide
The first house by the water-side,
Singing in her song she died,
    The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden-wall and gallery,
A gleaming shape she floated by,
Dead-pale between the houses high,
    Silent into Camelot.
Out upon the wharfs they came,
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
And round the prow they read her name,
    The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?
And in the lighted palace near
Died the sound of royal cheer;
And they cross'd themselves for fear,
    All the knights at Camelot:
But Lancelot mused a little space;
He said, "She has a lovely face;
God in his mercy lend her grace,
    The Lady of Shalott."